Sierra Club please return to
Ph-A.17008

sent 1/19
Findlay

JOSEPH N. LECONTE
BOX 1312
CARMEL, CALIFORNIA

A. R. FOSTER
348 ALAHMAR TERRACE
SAN GABRIEL, CALIF.

Dec 27, 1948

Dear Mr. Foster :-

I was delighted to receive from you the photographs of Lake Marion. This is a hallowed spot for me, for at the base of that rock, on which is the bronze tablet, lie the ashes of my beloved wife Helen. She and I, you might say, discovered this beautiful lake, for before we worked our way up the Cañon of Cartridge Creek in 1902, no one had ever seen the lake, except perhaps a few scattered sheep-men. I myself am an ardent lover of the High Sierra, and have spent every summer in the mountains from

1889 to 1930, nearly 45 trips. Most of these were with a pack train, and I did all my own packing. Mrs. Le Conte and I were married in 1901, and the next year found us, as usual, in the Kings-Kern country. After spending some weeks with the Sierra Club in the Kings River Cañon, we pushed north over Granite Basin to Simpson Meadow with one companion (Curtis Lindley). Then we followed the old trail up to Cartridge Creek, where there was an old mine. From there on up the Creek there was just the remnant of an old trail, and we had to practically cut our way through the brush up to the Lake Basin.

There we found lovely Lake Marian, and I named it for my wife then. Later we camped at the head of the lake basin, and, leaving our animals staked, pushed on across the divide to the east over to the head of the South Fork of the Kings, and made the first ascent of Split Mountain, (14100 feet). This was a 2-day Knap-sack trip. A complete account of this trip you will find in the Sierra Club Bulletin, Vol. 4, July 1903, page 258. The Sierra Club maintains an office in Los Angeles at 704 Auditorium Bldg, 427. West 5th Street, and I am sure that you will find there a complete set of bound volumes of the Bulletin.

The next time Helen and I visited Lake Marian was the following Summer of 1903. We again went up Cartridge Creek in a party of 6, and again camped on the shore of the beautiful Lake Marian. Then three of us men made a knapsack trip to the North Palisade, and made the first ascent of that magnificent peak (14254 ft). This was a 4-day knapsack trip, so my wife did not undertake it, but remained the 4 days at the lake (See Sierra Club Bulletin Vol 5, Jan 1904 page 1)

These are the only two times my wife ever visited the lake. She died in Aug. 1924. The next Summer I carried her ashes up to the beautiful lake, buried them at the foot of the boulder, and then riveted on the bronze plate

myself. When I did this I had with me my two children, Helen and Joseph. I am glad the tablet is still in place. I feared the set-screws might have rusted off after 23 years.

On this year, 1925, we returned to Granite Basin by going up the chute (with our pack train) at the S.W. corner of the lake, over a pass just north of Marion Peak, and along the plateau back to Dougherty Corral on the Simpson Meadow trail. I covered this route again in 1928; a magnificent trip.

But my mountaineering days are over now. Not only on account of my

age, but because I have lost my left leg. But I have a glorious memory of those days past. That, perhaps is the best of all.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Joseph N. Le Conte